

Subject: US Operations in the Vicinity of the Gulf of Sidra (S)

MAJOR POINTS:

- Oct 73: Permanent representative of Libyan Arab Republic to United Nations announced in a note verbale that the Gulf of Sidra south of 32°30'N was an integral part of Libya and under its complete sovereignty.
- COMSIXTHFLT conducts two-three open ocean missile exercises each year to maintain fleet readiness
 - Gulf of Sidra is best area in Mediterranean to conduct missile firings (located in international waters)
 - Other missile firing ranges available to SIXTHFLT are in controlled airspace which require prior coordination/scheduling
 - Namfi - scheduled through SHAPE HQS; located north of Crete
 - Salto di Querra - controlled by Italians; located southeast of Sardinia
- Jul 77 - Apr 79: SIXTHFLT conducted exercises in Gulf of Sidra on 5 occasions. (Jul 77; Mar, Jul, Sep 78; Apr 79)
 - Not all exercises included operations south of 32°30'N nor were they all missile exercises (MISSILEX)
- Open ocean MISSILEX (OOM) and transit activity.
 - 7 Sep 78 OOM: No operations south of 32°30'N
 - 16/17 Feb 79 transit: Flight operations to within 55NM of Libya JCS review completed.
 - No Libyan reaction
 - 29 Jul 79 OOM: Two S-3 aircraft conducted surveillance operations south of 32°30'N for approximately eight minutes
 - Libyans protested MISSILEX
 - 20/22 Jan 80 transit: Two surface ships transited across Gulf of Sidra at 32°35'N
 - No Libyan reactions noted

NAVY review
completed.

State Dept. review completed

SECRET

-- 14 Jun 80 OOM: NOTAM included area south of 32°30'N

--- Note verbale delivered stating that Libya "protests this hostile action and at the same time reserves her right to take all the measures, which she deems appropriate, to defend her rights and legitimate interests within her territorial waters."

--- Libyans declared three airspace restrictions to conduct military training in the same area

--- State (Mr. David Newson) and OSD (Mr. R. W. Komer) requested that no US exercise activity be conducted south of 32°30'N

--- Minimal Libyan reaction to exercise (reconnaissance activity)

-- 21 Sep 80 OOM: NOTAM included area south of 32°30'N

--- Libyans protested operation

--- Libyans declared forces would exercise in same area

--- Libyan air and surface activity and Soviet naval presence temporarily delayed the exercise

---- Portions of the exercise were cancelled

--- Operations south of 32°30'N cancelled

SUMMARY

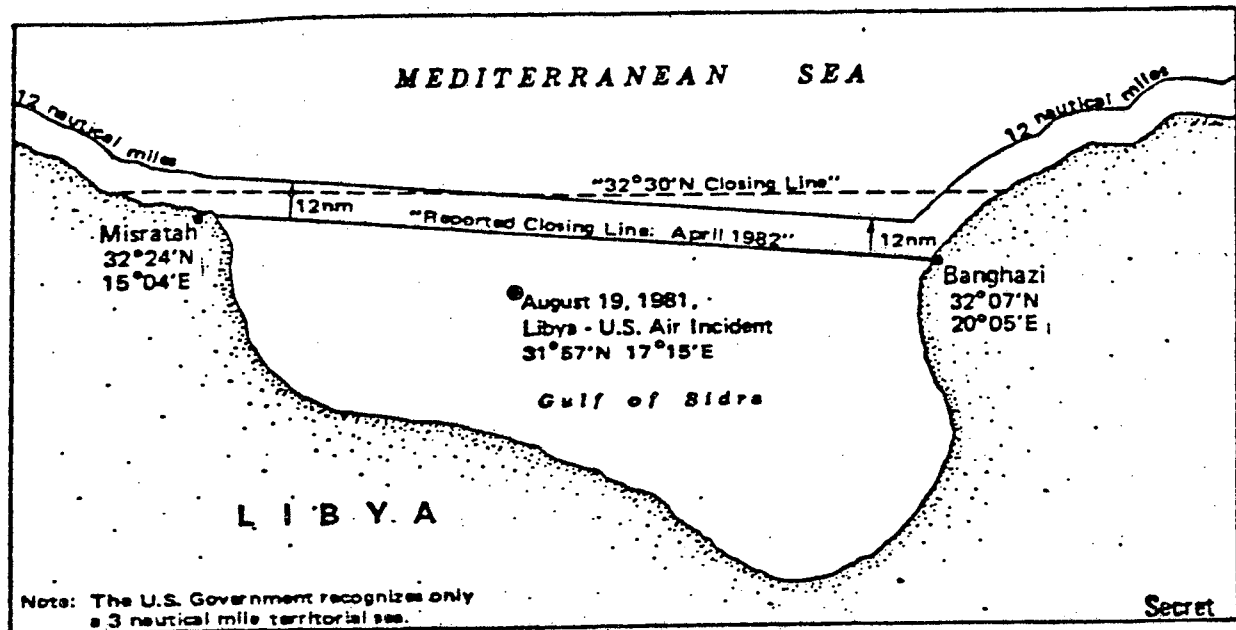
- During the June and Sep 1980 OOMs, US has cancelled planned activity south of 32°30'N in response to Libyan protests

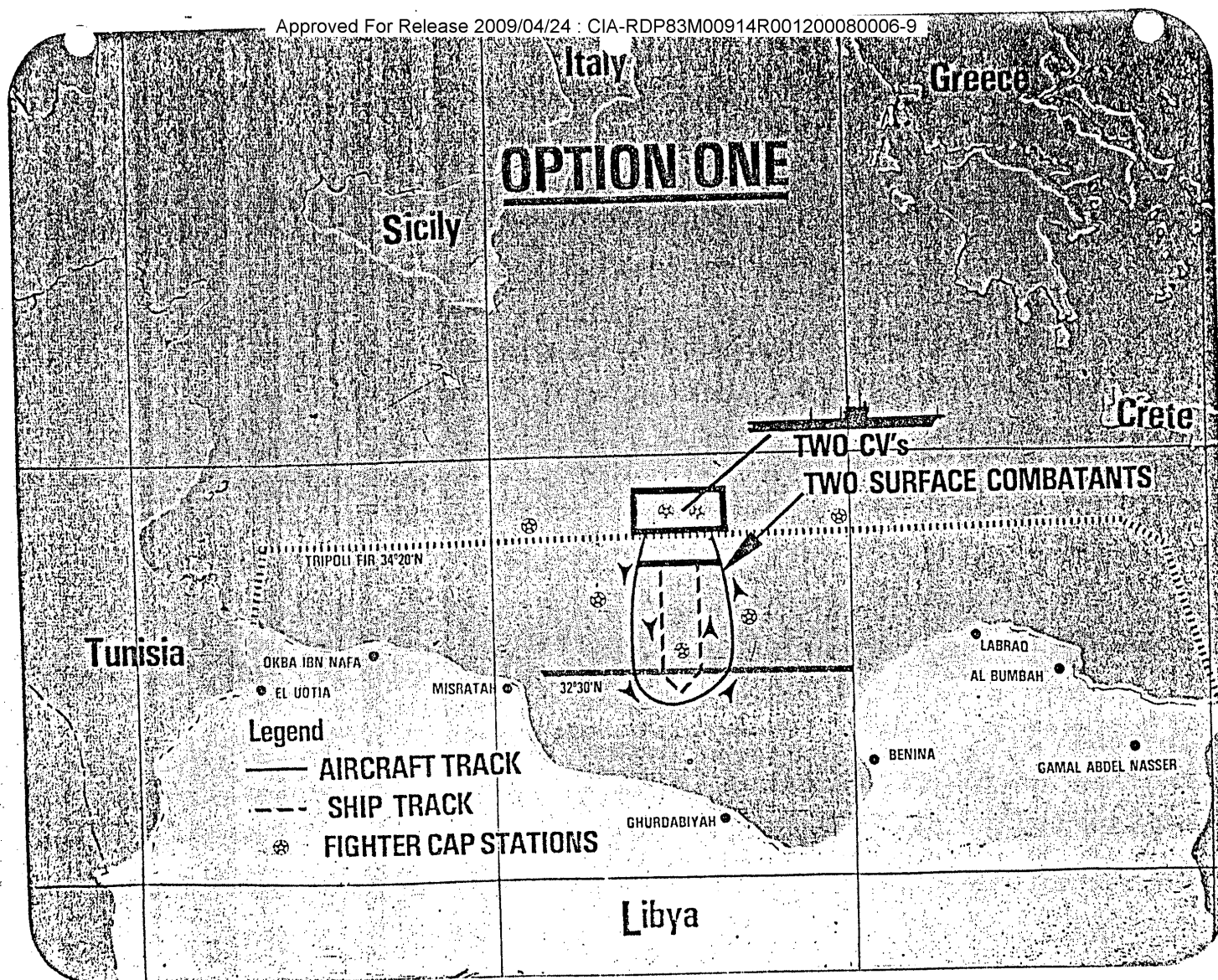
--- Provided tacit recognition of Libya's illegal maritime claim

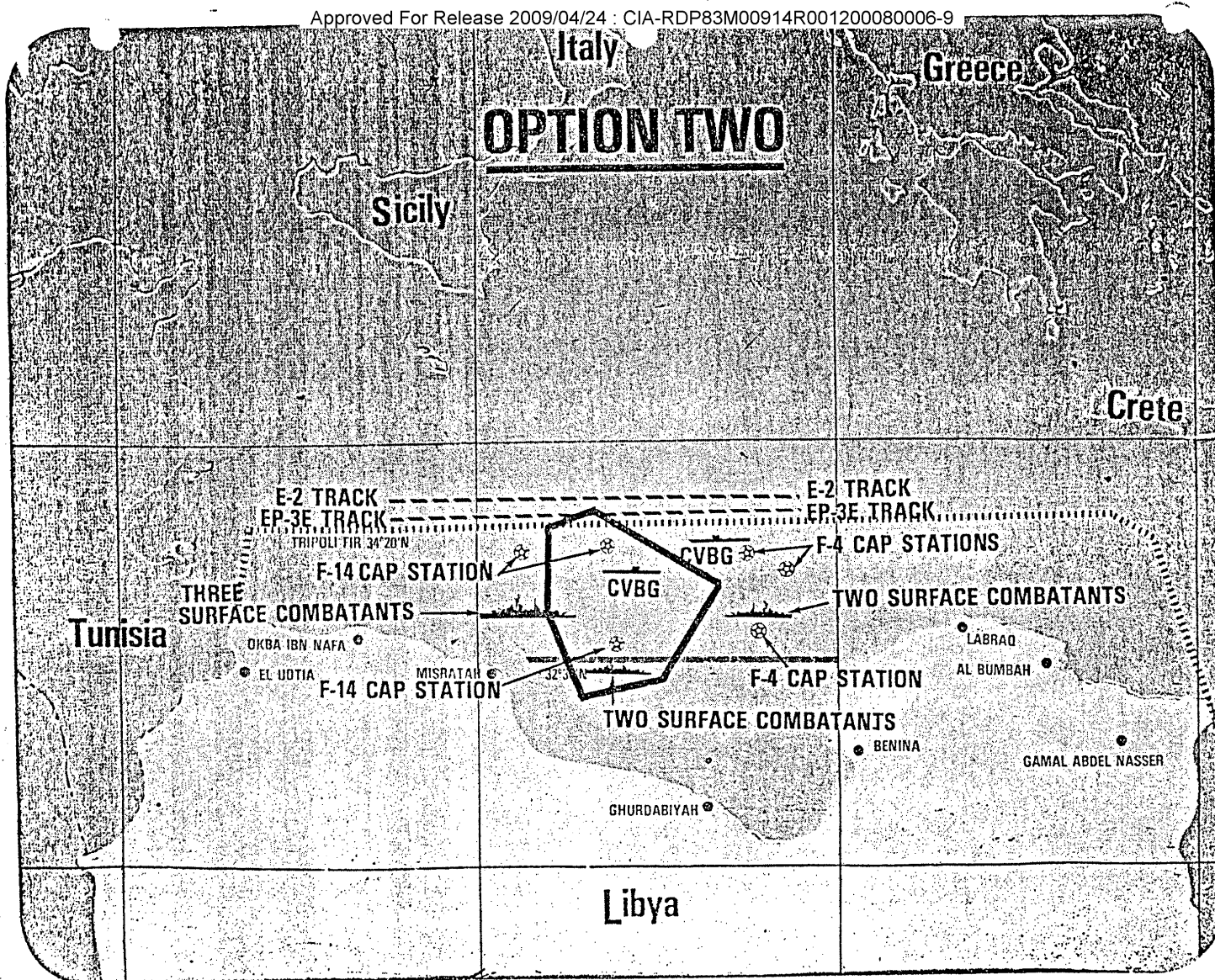
- NSC "Navigation and Overflight Policy Paper" approved in Feb 79 states:

-- "US should exercise its rights in the face of illegal claims to the extent practicable and should avoid actions which are viewed as acquiescence in such illegal claims."

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE



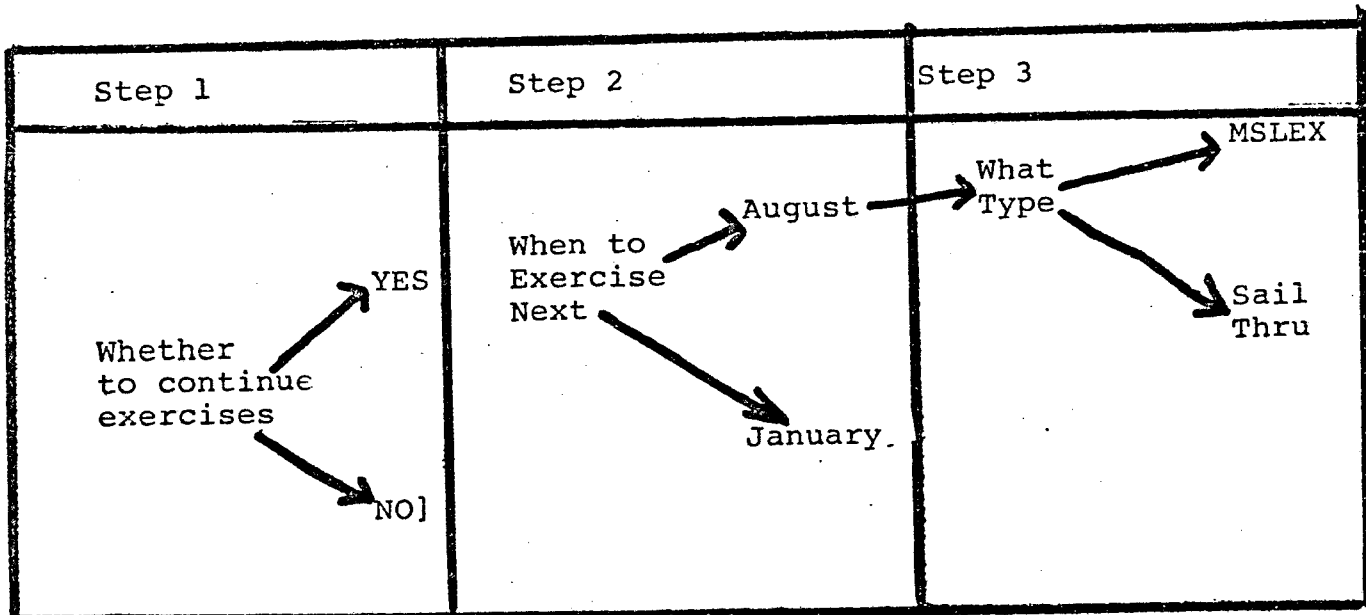




TOP SECRET/SENSITIVEAbility of Options to Meet Policy Goals

Type of Exercise	Goals		
	Political Signal About Qadhafi	LOS Challenge Program	Live Missile Training
Missile Exercise	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sail Thru Exer	Maybe	Yes	No

Table 2

Decision Chart on Sidra ExerciseTOP SECRET/SENSITIVE